

House Resolution 650

By: Representatives Gardner of the 57th, Manning of the 32nd, Cooper of the 41st, Porter of the 143rd, Oliver of the 83rd, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Creating the House Study Committee on Autism; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, the health of its citizens is of primary importance to the State of Georgia; and

3 WHEREAS, autism spectrum disorders (ASD) are a group of developmental disabilities
4 defined by significant impairments in social interaction and communication and the presence
5 of unusual stereotypical or repetitive behaviors, interests, and activities that often appear
6 before the age of three and affect all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups; and

7 WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Autism and Developmental
8 Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network reports that the rate of autism among the
9 population has grown by 173 percent over the past decade and that in 2007 one in every 150
10 eight-year-old children had a diagnosed ASD; and

11 WHEREAS, prevalence in Georgia is slightly higher, with reports of one in every 132
12 eight-year-old children having a diagnosed ASD; prevalence is higher among boys than
13 among girls, and in Georgia the ratio reaches five boys for every girl with ASD; and the
14 latest study of the ADDM Network reports that one in every 81 eight-year-old boys had a
15 diagnosis of ASD in Georgia; and

16 WHEREAS, while researchers do not know what causes autism, scientists generally agree
17 that genetics and environment play a role; and

18 WHEREAS, recognized therapies for ASD include behavioral therapy and/or developmental
19 therapy; physical and occupational therapies; speech therapy; family counseling for the
20 parents and siblings of children with autism; medications to control seizures, anxiety,
21 attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, depression, and obsessive
22 compulsive disorders; and biomedical treatments, including nutritional and dietary therapies;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, it would be beneficial to study the causes of autism and the effectiveness of
25 treatments of autism.

26 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
27 there is created the House Study Committee on Autism to be composed of five members of
28 the House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of
29 Representatives. The Speaker shall designate a member of the committee as chairperson of
30 the committee. The chairperson shall call all meetings of the committee.

31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall undertake a study of the above
32 issues and recommend any actions or legislation that the committee deems necessary or
33 appropriate. The committee may conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as
34 it may deem necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers,
35 perform its duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution. The
36 members of the committee shall receive the allowances authorized for legislative members
37 of interim legislative committees but shall receive the same for not more than five days
38 unless additional days are authorized. The funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this
39 resolution shall come from the funds appropriated to the House of Representatives. In the
40 event that the committee makes a report of its findings and recommendations with
41 suggestions for proposed legislation, if any, such report shall be made on or before December
42 31, 2009. The committee shall stand abolished on December 31, 2009.